

An Overview...



Alabama's Early Intervention System for Infants and Toddlers With Disabilities

In Alabama, a system of supports and services is in place for infants and toddlers with disabilities, and their families. This system has been created in response to federal legislation known as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* and serves eligible children up to 3 years of age. Alabama's Early Intervention System is:

- statewide - available to all eligible infants and toddlers and their families throughout the state;
- comprehensive - provides all the supports and services for the child and family as outlined in their individualized plan;
- coordinated - involved with other agencies and organizations that serve young children so that services are not disjointed and there is no unnecessary duplication;
- collaborative - works with other public and private agencies and organizations that typically provide services for children and families;
- financially coordinated - supports us of federal, state, local and private sources of funds;
- quality - uses qualified service providers, expands existing early intervention services being provided to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families, and supervises and monitors early intervention service providers;
- in natural environments - serves children and families in settings and activities where children without disabilities participate, including the home and community settings; and
- family-oriented - involves family members as *key* partners in planning for and making decisions regarding their child's program.

In Alabama, state and local level councils have been developed to coordinate supports and services for eligible families. These *district coordinating councils* consist of family members, service providers and representatives from local agencies and organizations. For additional information about the council in your area, call **Early Intervention Child Find at 1-800-543-3098**.

Alabama's Early Intervention System includes seven major components. These components are:

1. **Child Find** — Potentially eligible infants and toddlers may be identified by a parent or family member who is concerned about their child's development. They may also be identified by individuals in hospitals, doctors' offices, community health or well-baby clinics, child day care programs, maternal and child health programs, Medicaid and ALL Kids staff, state developmental disabilities programs, hospital follow-up clinics and/or Head Start programs.
2. **Eligibility** — Any infant or toddler age birth to 3 with a delay of 25 percent or more in any of the major areas of development - cognitive, physical, communication, social or emotional or adaptive development - who lives in Alabama is eligible to receive supports and appropriate services through the state's early intervention system. Infants and toddlers are also eligible if they have a diagnosed physical or mental condition that likely will result in a developmental delay.

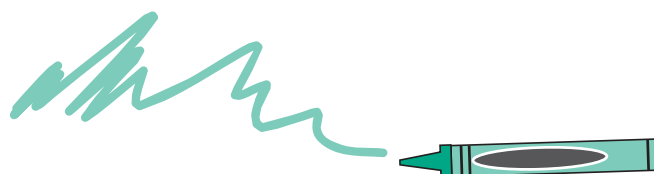
3. Referral Process — Once an infant or toddler has been identified as possibly needing early intervention supports and services, he or she should be referred to Alabama's Early Intervention System (**Early Intervention Child Find at 1-800-543-3098**) so that an evaluation for eligibility can be completed.

4. Evaluation and Assessment — Each child referred to Child Find will have an evaluation and assessment by appropriate, qualified professionals within 45 days of the referral. The *evaluation* will determine each child's eligibility. Once eligibility is determined, the specific intervention needs of the child and family are *assessed* and a written plan is developed.

5. Services — In Alabama's Early Intervention System, the following services are available for eligible infants and toddlers and their families: assistive technology devices and services, audiology, family training, counseling and home visits, health services (that are not purely medical or surgical), medical services (for diagnosis or evaluation only), nursing, nutrition, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological services; service coordination, social work services, special instruction, speech/language services, vision services, and transportation and related costs.

6. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) — Each eligible child and family will have a plan that is written by the family and other members of the child's team. This written plan (IFSP) describes the resources, supports, services and goals for the child and family. The plan is required to be developed and written within 45 days of the referral to Early Intervention Child Find. The plan is developed by the team, which includes the family, and is reviewed at least every six months during the child's eligibility for AEIS. Plans for the eligible child's transition from Alabama's Early Intervention System must also be addressed by the team at least six months prior to his or her third birthday.

7. Child and Family Rights — In Alabama, the rights of eligible children and families are protected under certain federal regulations and procedures. These rights include parental consent, complaint procedures, confidentiality, sharing of records, and due process procedures.



**To learn more about
Alabama's Early Intervention System,
contact the Early Intervention Office,
located within the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services,
at 1-800-441-7607 or visit the web site at www.rehab.state.al.us.**